

Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission

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Minutes of Commission Meeting

Regular Meeting | Thursday, June 21, 2018 at 10:00 AM

Location: Coverdell Legislative Office Building
Room 606, 18 Capitol Square SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

PRESENT:

Commission Members:

Mary Paige Adams, Chair
Dennis Cathey, Vice-Chair
Jake Evans, Commission Member
Via Telephone:
James D. Kreyenbuhl, Commission Member

Office of the Attorney General:

Christian Fuller, Assistant Attorney-General

Commission Staff:

Stefan Ritter, Executive Secretary
Robert Lane, Deputy Executive Secretary
Bethany Whetzel, Deputy Executive Secretary
Nancy Sandberg, Legal Secretary
Chris Phelps, Paralegal
Maria Bazile, IT
DeAngelo Hall, Videographer
Patrick Stephens, Court Reporter
Ewin Yap, Office Administrator

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES:

Minutes of the Regular March 22, 2018 Commission Meeting were motioned and approved as presented with no corrections.

Motioned by: Vice-Chair Cathey
Seconded by: Chair Adams
Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved

Minutes of the Special Call Telephonic April 12, 2018 Commission Meeting were motioned and approved as presented with no corrections.

Motioned by: Vice-Chair Cathey
Seconded by: Chair Adams
Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved

PRELIMINARY HEARINGS:

The following cases were heard and motioned as follows:

- 2017-0213PC: In the Matter of Gloria Thompson (RL):

It was motioned and approved to find that reasonable grounds exist to believe that violations of the Act occurred.

Motioned by: Chair Adams

Seconded by: Commissioner Evans

Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved

- 2017-0211PC: In the Matter of Charles K. Shaheen III (RL)
It was motioned and approved to find that reasonable grounds exist to believe that violations of the Act occurred.
Motioned by: Chair Adams
Seconded by: Commissioner Evans
Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved
- 2017-0221PC: In the Matter of Gregory Cecil Clifton (RL)
It was motioned and approved to find that reasonable grounds exist to believe that violations of the Act occurred.
Motioned by: Chair Adams
Seconded by: Vice-Chair Cathey
Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved
- 2018-0019PC: In the Matter of Eshé Collins (RL)
It was motioned and approved to find that reasonable grounds exist to believe that violations of the Act occurred.
Motioned by: Chair Adams
Seconded by: Vice-Chair Cathey
Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved
- 2016-039: In the Matter of Catherine Bernard (RL)
The Commission found no reasonable grounds to believe that the Campaign Finance Act may have been violated for the imposition of penalties (with the issue of late fees to be addressed by notice). It was motioned and approved to find the complainant's allegations are without cause and declares the complaint as frivolous.
Motioned by: Vice-Chair Cathey
Seconded by: Chair Adams
Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved
- 2017-0180PC: In the Matter of Shawn Bullock (BW)
It was motioned and approved to find that reasonable grounds exist to believe that violations of the Act occurred.
Motioned by: Chair Adams
Seconded by: Commissioner Evans
Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved
- 2017-0230PC: In the Matter of John Eaves (BW)
It was motioned and approved to find that reasonable grounds exist to believe that violations of the Act occurred.
Motioned by: Chair Adams
Seconded by: Commissioner Evans
Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved
- 2017-0224PC: In the Matter of Nicky Paul Starling (BW)

It was motioned and approved to find that reasonable grounds exist to believe that violations of the Act occurred.

Motioned by: Chair Adams

Seconded by: Commissioner Evans

Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved

The following Preliminary Hearings had requested and were granted continuances to the next regularly scheduled meeting in September 2018 as follows:

- 2015-0050PC: In the Matter of Sharon Barnes-Sutton (RL):
- 2017-0212PC: In the Matter of Erica Woodford (BW):

The following cases were moved from Preliminary Hearings to Consent Orders:

- 2016-0029: In the Matter of Evita Arnedo Paschall (RL)
- 2016-0063: In the Matter of Steven Miller (RL)
- 2017-0223PC: In the Matter of Kamali Varner (RL)
- 2017-0239PC: In the Matter of John Charles Turner (RL)
- 2017-0241PC: In the Matter of Jason Winters (RL)
- 2018-0019PC: In the Matter of Eshé Collins (RL)
- 2018-0029: In the Matter of Chris Erwin (RL)

CONSENT ORDERS:

The following Consent Orders and Preliminary Hearings, which are now Consent Orders were motioned and approved to accept all as presented in the following groups:

- 2016-0029: In the Matter of Evita Arnedo Paschall (RL)
- 2016-0063: In the Matter of Steven Miller (RL)
- 2017-0223PC: In the Matter of Kamali Varner (RL)
- 2017-0239PC: In the Matter of John Charles Turner (RL)
- 2017-0241PC: In the Matter of Jason Winters (RL)
- 2016-0011: In the Matter of William "Bill" Johnson (RL)
- 2016-0045: In the Matter of Akhtar Sadiq (RL)
- 2017-0225PC: In the Matter of Gary Bechtel (RL)
- 2017-0235PC: In the Matter of Doug Ireland (RL)
- 2017-0243PC: In the Matter of Brittany D. Pittman (RL)
- 2017-0183PC: In the Matter of Shanan Eugene Jones (RL)
- 2016-0047PC: In the Matter of Marvin Arrington Jr. (RL)
- 2018-0023PC: In the Matter of Kathie Buchanan (RL)
- 2015-0056PC: In the Matter of James Marcus Cantrell (RL)
- 2018-0042: In the Matter of Lisa Lott (BW)
- 2017-0178PC: In the Matter of William Ervin Breazeale (BW)
- 2017-0186: In the Matter of Robert Troy Brumbalow (BW)
- 2017-0204: In the Matter of Natalyn M. Archibong (BW)

Motioned by: Chair Adams

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Cathey

Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved

The following Consent Order Commissioner Evans recused himself. It was motioned and approved of as presented:

- 2018-0029: In the Matter of Chris Erwin (RL)

Motioned by: Chair Adams

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Cathey

Vote: 3 to 0 motion carries with 1 abstention (Commissioner Evans)

The following respondent arrived to the meeting after her case had been heard and motioned as a Preliminary Hearing and was now seeking to be heard as a Consent Order. It was motioned and approved as follows:

- 2018-0019PC: In the Matter of Eshé Collins (RL)

It was motioned and approved to withdraw the previous motion finding that reasonable grounds exist to believe that violations of the Act occurred.

Motioned by: Chair Adams

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Cathey

Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried to withdraw the previous motion

The Consent Order was motioned and approved as presented.

Motioned by: Chair Adams

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Cathey

Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved

COMMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:

Executive Secretary Stefan Ritter gave the following reports:

- Summary of cases Administratively Dismissed since the last meeting was presented for:
 - ♦ 2016-0013: In the Matter of Augustus Skeen (BW)
 - ♦ 2017-0238PC: In the Matter of Christopher Lowe Mills (BW)
 - ♦ 2017-0240PC: In the Matter of Mark Schrader (BW)
 - ♦ 2018-0002: In the Matter of Robert Trammell (BW)
- Summary of two Initial Decisions by the Administrative Law Judges that have become Final Decisions of the Commission by operation of law.
 - ♦ 2012-0010PC: In the Matter of Irby Allen Meadors (BW)
 - ♦ 2016-0030: In the Matter of Christopher G. Nicholson (BW)
- Report on Waivers and Case Counts:

There have been forty-six (46) Late Fee Hardship Waiver Requests received in 2018, fourteen (14) are open and pending and thirty-two (32) have been resolved, with a total of \$94,475 of late fees that have been waived.

As of June 20, 2018 we have 106 active cases and 30 Administrative Procedures Act (APA) cases, for a total of 136 active cases. Since the last meeting on April 12, 2018 the commission has the following case load intake: after initial investigation by attorneys rejected 5 complaint cases, accepted for further investigation/prosecution 29 complaint cases, initiated (*sua sponte*) by commission staff 1 case, and has approximately 39 pending complaints (*sua sponte*) by commission staff. The Commission has resolved a total of 238 cases from July 1, 2014 to April 11, 2018 consisting of 164 cases closed by Consent Order, 71 cases closed by Administrative/Commission Approved Dismissals, 3 cases closed due to want of jurisdiction. There have been 32 cases presented for Probable Cause.
- Update on Collections Cases:

There have been a total of 34 cases referred to the Attorney General's Office, of which 22 remain open, collections are proceeding in 11 cases and 6 of 12 cases are in active repayment status.
- Employee Update:

At present we have been unable to find an additional IT Tech position and are looking into using some temporary help. There has been a turnover in the State Accounting Office including our Human Resources person. Employee issues have been documented and we are moving along appropriately. We have a dedicated staff.

- Budget Update:
The agency is not expected to exceed our budget this year. We are doing well with space, finances, and employees. The General Assembly did not appropriate any money for raises this year.

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S COMMENTS:

Christian Fuller gave an update on the status of cases pending in their office.

COMMENTS OF THE PUBLIC:

There were no public comments.

MEETING ADJOURNED:

It was motioned and approved to adjourn the meeting at 11:31 AM.

Motioned by: Vice Chair Cathey

Seconded by: Commissioner Evans


Vote: 4 to 0 motion carried as approved

Official Minutes Statement

The foregoing Minutes for the June 21, 2018 meeting of the Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission were approved and adopted by the Commission at the Commission's meeting on September 20, 2018.


Chair


Date


1/8/2019